111.—REPORT OF OPERATIONS AT THE SHAD-HATCHING STATION ON BATTERY ISLAND, NEAR HAVRE DE GRACE, MD., DURING THE SEASON OF 1886.

By L. R. GRABILL,

Superintendent of Battery Station.

[Abstract.]

The first run of shad was perceived on April 18, and 35 ripe shad were taken on April 19. This run continued for a week, and was larger in number than had been known for 20 years. Both shad and herring came in enormous quantities. It was impossible to obtain the catch of shad at the seines during this run. The catch of Mr. Osmond's seine in shad for one day alone was more than 5,000.

The collection of spawn for the station was done by men and boys hired temporarily for the purpose. As many as 40 men and boys in addition to the station's ordinary force were employed. These were paid monthly wages, each being allowed \$10 a month for subsistence. It was endeavored to station men permanently at all the seines, and to attend to as many gill-nets as possible. The men were graded as first and second class spawn-takers, and apprentices. Besides these, boys were used merely as oarsmen.

Experience shows, however, that it will be better in the future to employ 3 men to every boat, 2 of whom are apprentices; these 2 to take nightly turns at receiving instruction. Boys, unless quite large and strong, cannot care for boats in a squall. Large as was the collecting force it could not attend to more than one half of the gilling boats on nights when all of the fishermen were out. As a rule it was found more profitable to attend gill-nets than seines.

Collection was continued from April 19 to June 10, the total number of eggs collected being 60,766,000. Of this number there were received from the steamer Fish Hawk 2,099,000, and from the steamer Lookout 2,433,000, the total received from other sources thus being 4,532,000.

The Commission's gill-nets were put in use during the latter part of the season, there being no scarcity of male fish during the first part. Notwithstanding the smaller mesh of the net, it was not noticed that there was a large difference from other nets in the proportion of male fish caught. The largest roe fish seen during the season was caught in one of the Commission's small-mesh gill-nets. On a few occasions these nets served a good purpose in supplying male fish for impregnating eggs, but they did not supply these male fish nearly so often as they were supplied from ordinary nets near at hand. The Commission's gill-nets, being fished by expert fishermen, caught about as many fish, both male and female, as most of the gill-nets fishing in the same locality.

At the beginning of the season the hatching department was not prepared to do the work that was forced upon it by the early and immense

run of shad. The connections for the hatching apparatus and for the water supply were inadequate to the demand, and the supply of hatching apparatus on hand was insufficient. To increase the hatching room an addition, covered with canvas, was made, accommodating 2 tables additional with 50 McDonald jars. The store-room used for the seine was furnished with sky-lights, and 28 hatching cones were placed in it, and about 30 cones in all conditions of repair were hastily fitted up outside of all shelter. Notwithstanding the increase thus made, the cones and jars constantly carried twice as many eggs as they should have done, and much loss was the result. But by far the greater loss was caused by being obliged to allow eggs brought in to stand in buckets, &c., until room could be made for them. In many cases eggs nearly hatched were compelled to be placed in the river to make room for new ones. About 170 McDonald jars and 58 cones were in constant use, supplemented by wire-gauze cylinders, buckets, pans, and all kinds of arrangements for hatching.

Three experts were employed during most of the season in the hatching-house. Three apprentices were also employed most of the time as assistants. These men received and cared for all eggs, cared for the fish when hatched, filled the cans for shipment, and loaded them in the launch or scow.

Notwithstanding the losses, the number of shad fry hatched was 45,231,000. These numbers are based on the measurement of the perfectly cleaned eggs in the jars just before hatching in every case, and are as nearly accurate as these figures can be made. It is believed that this is rather under than over the actual result. The percentage of hatching during the season was 74.4. The total number of fry shipped and receipted for by messengers was 43,776,000. The total loss of fish was 1,455,000. Three tables are appended to this report, which give details concerning the collection of the eggs, the shipments of the fry, and meteorological observations during most of the season.

The collecting force was entirely disbanded after June 10, when gilling is no longer permitted by Maryland laws. On June 13 all the eggs on hand had hatched, and the hatching department was then closed. But few eggs, however, were taken after June 1, the date on which the greater part of the force was discharged. After the close of the hatching season the time of the small number remaining was given to storing the equipment, and in work upon a drive-well, which was begun with the hope of finding an artesian water supply. This well was carried to a depth of about 150 feet by July 1.

There is little doubt but that the area of 4 or 5 square miles immediately surrounding Battery Station is as large as any, if not the largest, spawning ground for shad on the coast. The station is well located for reaching every part of this ground. The possibilities of the station are almost unlimited. Fishermen and fishing boats cover the bay during the season, and every ripe egg taken in fish in the nets would be

lost if it was not taken by the collectors of the station, impregnated, and hatched. One need only to see the bay studded with the lights of the fishing boats on a night in May to convince him that but for the Commission's work very few fish could come from eggs naturally deposited. But, large as was the Commission's force last year, I am satisfied that not over one-half of the ripe fish taken in the bay by fishermen were stripped by its collectors, as they could not possibly attend to all.

It is fairly demonstrated by this season's work that collecting from gillers produces a better result than hauling the Commission's seine. Two or 3 men can secure as many ripe fish from gillers in a day as 30 men would secure if employed in hauling the seine. Moreover, hauling the seine by the employees of the station necessarily involves the Fish Commission in the care and disposal of the fish taken, while it seems to antagonize the fishermen, and is an unnecessary cost. With a good run of fish in the coming year, if the collecting force is doubled and their work thoroughly systematized, perhaps double the number of eggs secured last season can be obtained during 1887. The collection of eggs in 1886 was stimulated also by giving small rewards to those gathering the greatest amount of good spawn.

PENNING SHAD.—Out of a large number of shad full of roe, but not ripe at the time of introduction, which were placed in the pool and kept for a space of time ranging from a few days to 2 weeks, not one ever produced eggs that would hatch, though apparently ripe when stripped. It would seem that possibly the fright at being taken in the net, or of confinement in the pool, prevents the eggs from further development. All of the fish placed in the pool become more or less diseased after a short time, which may be due partly to the muddy bottom. This interesting experiment has hitherto met with such small success as to warrant its being dropped hereafter.

HERRING.—Herring were taken continually and sometimes in such quantities as to retard the hauling of the seines. No account was kept of them, as they were considered valueless in most cases, and they were shoveled back dead into the river or allowed to escape through the large meshes before completely hauling in the seine.

ROCKFISH OR STRIPED BASS.—Experiments were made in hatching the eggs of the rockfish, the greatest success being obtained by swinging a cylinder with gauze ends in a sluice-way through which a current, caused by the tide, constantly flowed. It appears, however, that even with very fine gauze the eggs in a certain state are forced through. Owing to want of time, caused by pressure of other matters, sufficient attention could not be devoted to these experiments, and most of the eggs taken were lost. In all, 600,000 rockfish eggs were taken, and 75,000 fry were shipped to Lake Ontario, near Oswego, N. Y.*

WASHINGTON, D. C., December 20, 1886.

For notice of their successful planting, see F. C. Bulletin for 1886, p. 137.

Table I.—Record of the shad-hatching operations conducted at Battery Station, Maryland, from April 19 to June 13, 1886, under direction of L. R. Grabill, superintendent.

Date	•	Fish obtai	ned from—		by haul- les.t	Taken by gill-nets.	Ripe	shad.		.Lo	989.		Fish de-	Fish de-
Day of week.	Day of month.	Length of haul-seines visited.*	Length of gill-nets visited.	Shad. Rockfish.		Shad.	Males.	Females.	Eggs ob- tained.	Eggs.	Fish hatched.		posited in local waters.	posited in other waters.
Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Saturday Saturday Monday Tuesday Monday Tuesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday Tuesday Thursday Saturday Saturday Saturday Thursday Friday Saturday	Apr. 20 Apr. 21 Apr. 22 Apr. 23 Apr. 25 Apr. 26 Apr. 27 Apr. 28 Apr. 30 May 1 May 2 May 5 May 6 May 7	Fathoms. 2,500 2,700 2,700 2,700 2,500 1,800 1,500 1,500 1,500 1,500 1,900 2,000 1,500 1,800 1,900 1,500	Fathoms. 2, 190 1, 955 3, 200 6, 425 4, 582 1, 625 5, 725 5, 420 5, 505 5, 430 2, 375 4, 150 11, 390 8, 625 8, 550 9, 510 2, 700	3, 587 2, 188 2, 600 1, 700 1, 500 1, 500 1, 000 484 168 191 1, 056 1, 199 175 2, 437 1, 315 1, 850 1, 325 450	800 500 300 500 300 200	2, 009 1, 144 244 767 521 588 693 306 405 324 398 2, 314 2, 311 1, 954	20 35 45 90 56 10 20 20 35 30 20	210 110 108	5, 648, 000 4, 046, 000 3, 295, 000	2763, 000 3375, 000 4122, 000 5369, 000	\$169,000 1,000,0 1,177,0 1,177,0 1,177,0 1,177,0 1,175,0 1,500,0 1,500,0 1,000,0 1,100		25, 000 1, 421, 000 2, 431, 000 889, 000 1, 055, 000 50, 000 131, 952, 000 804, 000 503, 000 742, 000	(6) 71, 500, 00 101, 430, 00 1, 200, 00 1, 621, 00
Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday Monday Tuesday	May 9 May 10 May 11 May 12 May 13 May 14 May 15 May 16 May 17	1, 100 2, 600 2, 600 1, 800 2, 500 2, 800 1, 600	2, 250 1, 950 4, 200 4, 550 1, 525 9, 100 600 5, 850 7, 150	200 334 413 135 243 333 230 300 502	200 600 50 100 150 100	40 41 99 21 238 12		3 4 5 1 26 6	112,000 1532,000 151,127,000 193,000 248,000 265,000 305,000 1,469,000	66, 000 33, 000 50, 000 138, 000	10,000 50,000 40,000 30,000 6,000 20,000 20,000 30,000	2, 156, 000 2, 000, 000 3, 600, 000 1, 593, 000 1, 300, 000 1, 700, 000 1, 370, 000 300, 000 414, 000		141, 650, 00 2, 000, 00 2, 400, 00 850, 00 1, 900, 00 172, 350, 00 450, 00 300, 00
Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday	May 19 May 20 May 21	2, 900 1, 100 2, 300 1, 100	7, 150 11, 785 8, 425 6, 400 4, 035	400 400 266	100 25	377 240 198		61 50 41	1, 469, 000 1, 710, 000 1, 544, 000 1, 317, 000 1, 070, 060	482,000 205,000 269,000	30,000 10,000	200, 000 300, 000		300.

Monday May 22 Tuesday May 22 Wednesday May 22 Friday May 22 Friday May 23 Sunday May 34 Monday May 37 Tuesday June Wednesday June Friday June Saturday June Saturday June Saturday June Monday June	1,300	1, 350 1, 100 1, 750 1, 100 1, 150 1, 150 1, 250 700 200 1, 100	60 23	19150 19100	24 20 4 16 35 134 99 61 31 18 28 5	 4 5 22 14 22 8 6 3	64, 000 82, 000 78, 000 476, 000	34, 000 21, 000 96, 000 ²⁰ 134, 000	10,000	1,255,000 1,000,000 1,013,000 1,000,000 200,000 499,000 45,000	100, 000 21228, 000 21429, 000	2, 336, 000 977, 000 1, 500, 000 1, 100, 000 200, 000 550, 000
Tuesday June		1,750 400 200			111 3 2	 16	371,000		20, 000 10, 000	151, 000 147, 000 78, 000 403, 000 256, 000	21472, 000 21298, 000 21481, 000 21256, 000	

• Records for the haul-seines are very incomplete. No hanling of seines is allowed by Maryland law after June 1.

atter June 1.

† Herring were taken in great numbers, but no account of them was kept.

†74.4 per cent of ail eggs taken were hatched.

†Kept too long in buckets.

*No room for them in hatching-house.

*Kept on shore all night.

4 Not good.

Put on trays in refrigerator because hatching-house was full.

⁶ Fifty thousand eggs sent to H. C. Mercer, to be put into Danube River.

Sent to car No. 1. ⁷Sent to car No. 1.

⁸Eighty thousand hatched from 200,000 eggs in refrigerator, and died in a few hours; 89,000 lost by overflow of aquarizons.

⁹Lost by overflow of aquarizons.

¹⁰Shipped by car No. 1.

¹¹From steamer Fish Hawk, 2,099,000.

¹²On account of lack of water.

12 Eggs nearly hatched and put overboard to make room.

14 Also 585,000 eggs in best condition received this day.

118 day.

16 Also received 600,000 rockfish eggs.

16 From steamer Lookout, 992,000.

17 Also shipped 75,000 rockfish to Oswego, N. Y.

18 Two hundred pounds of other fish taken.

19 Five hundred pounds of other fish taken.

20 Over mature

²¹ Deposited in Susquehanna River, for want of means of removal.

22 Not assignable to particular date or dates.

TABLE II.—Record of meteorological observations made at Battery Station, Maryland, from May 1 to June 12, 1886, by William P. Sauerhoff and D. W. Kenly.

Date.		nper of a		tur	mpe e of s e wa	or-	tur	empe e of tom	bot-	Direc	tion of	wind.	Int	ensity of w	ind.	Con	ndition of s	sky.	Condition	State of tide.		
	7 a. m.	4 p. m.	11 p.m.	7 a.m.	4 p. m.	11 p. m.	7 a. m.	4 p. m.	11 p. m.	7 a. m.	4 p. m.	11 р. ш.	7 а. ш.	4 p.m.	11 p. m.	7 a.m.	4 p. m.	11 р. ш.	of water.	7 a.m.	4 p. m.	11 р. ш.
May 1	70 68 68 54 58 60 63 65	70 68 59 62 62 62 62 55 55 55 55 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60	61 665 67 665 67 666 686 687 687 688 684 670 67 67 67 67 67 67 67 67 67 67 67 67 67	o 61 57 664 64 663 655 660 655 665 665 665 665 665 665 665	0 60 2 64 65 65 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60	o 59 66 44 44 462 66 66 66 66 66 66 66 66 66 66 66 66 6	0 6157 6044 613 63 560 59 588 588 558 557 559 60 62 655 68 66 66 66 66 66 66 66 66 66 66 66 66	0 60 62 4 65 5 5 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6	0 59 60 64 64 64 64 66 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60 60	NE.	N. S.	S. E. NW. SE. SE. NE.	Strong Fresh Light do do Fresh Light Strong Fresh do do do do do do do Light do do Light L	Strong. Light. do do do fresh Light Strong. do Calm Light Calm Fresh Light Calm Strong Light Calm Gresh Light Calm Light Very l't	Fresh. Light. do do Strong. Light Light Strong Light Calm Light Strong Light do Fresh Calm Light do Fresh Calm Light do Fresh Light do Light do Light do Light do Light do Light do Strong Light do do do do do do	Cloudydo	Cloudydododododododo	Cloudydo	dodododododododo	High Flood do	Ebb Flood do	Ebb. Do. Do. Do. Do. Do. Low. Ebb. Do. Do. Low. Ebb. Do. Do. Ebb. Ebb. Ebb. Do. Do. Do. Ebb.

5 6 7 ²⁰	68 65 73	77 701 75	65 70 72	68 69 71	69 71 74	68 70 73	68 69 71	69 71 74	68 70 73	SE. N.	S. SE. N.	 S.	Light	do Light do	do do	do do do do	do do	do do	do do	Ebb do	do do	Do. Do. Do.
1022	71	76 76	77	72	76 ·	75 75	72	76 76	75 75	NW.	SW.	N.	do	Light	do	Cloudy . Clear do	Clear	do Clear	do	do	Flood	Do. Ebb.

¹ Tide very low; no water in tank from 2 a.m. to 3.18

² Rain from 4 a. m. to 6.30 a. m.

3 Rain at 11 a.m.

4 Rain; stopped at 4 p. m. Water very muddy.

⁶ Rain from 10.20 p. m. to 11 p. m. ⁷ Rain from 6.30 a. m. to 9.15 p. m.

8 Rain from 6.30 p. m. to 11 p. m.

9 Strong wind and current, making ebb run over its

10 Water began to clear at 4 p. m. : current falling fast.

11 Rain at 11 p. m.

12 Stopped raining at 9 a.m.

13 Rain from 4 a. m. to 2.45 p. m.

14 Rain from 1.15 a. m. to 3.45 a. m. 15 Rain from 11.50 a, m. to 2 p. m.

16 Rain from 8.45 a. m. to 11.45 a. m.

17 Day rather warm: light drizzle in early morn-

ing.

18 West wind making very high tides.
19 Wind blowing northwest for several days kept

²⁰ Rain from 1 p. m. to 2 p. m.
²¹ Rain from 12.50 p. m. to 5 p. m.

22 Began raining at 7 p. m.

Table III.—Statement of shipments of shad fry made from Battery Station, Havre de Grace, Md., in April, May, and June, 1886.

State.	Place of deposit.	Stream.	Date.	Number sent.
Maryland	Near Battery Station1	Susquehanna River	Apr. 25	25, 000
Do Do	Below Port Depositi	Susquehanna Riverdo	Apr. 26 Apr. 27	1, 421, 000 2, 431, 000
Maryland Do	1		Apr. 27 Apr. 28 Apr. 28	(²) 860, 000 1, 500, 000
Do Do	Above Havre de Grace ¹ Near Battery Station ¹	Gunpowder, Northeast, and Patapsco Rivers. ⁴	Apr. 29 Apr. 30 Apr. 30	1, 055, 000 50, 000 1, 430, 000
Do Pennsylvania Maryland	Harrisburg ⁴ Near Battery Station ¹	Bush and Elk Rivers ⁴	May 1 May 3 May 3	1, 200, 000 1, 621, 000 61, 952, 000
Rhode Island Maryland	Providence4	Narragansett Bay	May 5 May 5 May 6	1, 500, 000 804, 000 1, 245, 000
Do	Delow Tott Deposit	Chester Rivers	May 7 May 8 May 9 May 9	500, 000 650, 000 1, 000, 000
T)o	Columbia ⁴	Northeast Rivers Broad and Saluda Rivers	May 9 May 10 May 10	(8) 500, 000 1, 500, 000
Do		Gunpowder River ⁶ Bush River ⁶ Northeast River ⁹ Northeast and Elk Rivers ⁶	May 11 May 11 May 11	600, 000 300, 000 1, 500, 000
Do		Northeast River and flats off Locust Point. Do Monongahela River	May 12 May 12 May 12	600, 000 1, 500, 000
Maryland	••••••	Brandywine and Nanticoke Rivers. ⁶ Sassafras River	May 13	250, 000 900, 000
Do		Withlacoochee and Ocklock- onnee Rivers. ⁴ James River.	May 13 May 14	1, 000, 000 1, 500, 000
Virginia New York Maryland Do	Clifton Forge ¹¹ Near Oswego ⁶ Below Port Deposit ¹	Lake Ontario	May 14 May 14 May 14 May 15	250, 000 (¹²) 600, 000
Delaware		Susquehanna River. Brandywine River ³ Cheat River Chester River.	May 16 May 17 May 18	370, 000 450, 900 300, 000 600, 000
Delaware Maryland	Rowlesburgh ¹³ Millington ³ Seaford ⁶ Salisbury ⁶	Nanticoke River. Wicomico River. Patuxent River ³ Monougahela River ¹¹ Susquehanna River	May 18 May 19 May 19 May 21	450, 000 450, 000 540, 000
West Virginia Pennsylvania Maryland Pennsylvania	Near Columbia 6	Monongahela River ¹¹ Susquehanna Riverdo do	May 21 May 24 May 25 May 26	800, 000 895, 000 750, 000 836, 000
Do Delaware	Marietta* Seaford ⁷	Nanticoke River	May 26 May 27 May 28	1,500,000 977,000 500,000
North Carolina West Virginia Pennsylvania	Fayetteville ⁴ Fairmont ¹¹ Safe Harbor ⁶	Cape Fear River Monongahela River Susquehanna River do do do	May 29 May 30 May 31	1, 100, 000 200, 000 550, 000
Do Maryland Do	Above Havre de Grace ³ Below Havre de Grace ¹ do ¹	do	June 1 June 2 June 5 June 7	500, 000 100, 000 228, 000 429, 000
Do Do	Near Battery Station ¹ do ¹ do ¹	do	June 9 June 10 June 12	472, 000 298, 000 481, 000
Total			June 13	250, 000 43, 776, 000

By employees of station.
 Fifty thousand eggs on trays shipped to H. C. Mercer, by steamship Eider, for Danube River.
 By R. H. Dana.
 By N. Simmons, car No. 1.
 Eggs almost hatched when put into river.
 By F. L. Donnelly.

⁷ By J. F. Ellis, car No. 3. ⁸ Delivered 585,000 eggs in good order. ⁹ By steamer Lookout. ¹⁰ By launches Nos. 68 and 82. ¹¹ By H. E. Quinn. ¹² Seventy-five thousand rockfish.